

## John Coffee to Andrew Jackson, February 8, 1816, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

### BRIGADIER-GENERAL JOHN COFFEE TO JACKSON.

Camp Coffee on Tennessee River, February 8, 1816.

*Dear Genl,* With much pleasure I have just heard of your arrival at home, and hope that you and Mrs. Jackson has performed the fatigues of a laborious Journey and returned in health.

"I arrived here yesterday, after running a line from Camp Wills, with your road to the foot of the mountain beyond Browns, and thence north to the River Ten, when done I said to Dick Brown and his Clan, if they would enter into an agreement with me for a line, that I would run it, from the mouth of Wills creek to Camp Wills, thence to this place so as to include Browns settlement on the Cherokee lands; or otherwise I would report the line already run as the true line; Brown and Thompson is more than willing to make the agt. but are afraid to do it without a Counsel, for which purpose they requested a meeting of their Chiefs with me here today, some have come forward but not yet as many as they wish to do business, I am not certain if they will meet or agree, yet I think they will.

The other line I have thought ought to run down the Ten. River to Caney creek which empties into Ten. about fifteen miles below the Shoals and with it to its head and thence due south to Gains road, and with it to the cotton Gin post, thence down the River Tombigby to the Choctaw line, etc. I have the statement of Chinabie, Spoke Hajah, and all the Cherokee nation to justify the principal part of this line, and if supported I intend running it in that way, am told the Chickasaws and Chocktaws, or perhaps some of their

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disorderly young men will oppose me, I am not afraid of a body of them coming against me, but think it likely if no guard they may offer insult or at least they would steal our horses, as such would judge it right to have 20 or 30 armed men to accompany me, I can run and mark that line, which will form our whole western boundary in two weeks, and seeing the probable delay that would result from waiting the arrival of regular troops, and their tardy mode of movements I have thought it would be justifiable to call on mounted Volunteers; the service would be so short, and the lines completed so much earlier by such course, that I think the government would be benefited thereby—in the event such can be admitted I have the offer of men at a minutes warning in Madison County. Mr. John M Armstrong has offered to furnish them and supply them at contract price, and as there is no contractors here, presume no injury could arise therefrom.

In my last to you, I mentioned I had not heard from the Commissioners, when or whether they would meet me agreeable to their promise when I first recd, the appointment, nor have I as yet heard from them on the subject, although I have written them twice by express, I have determined to act alone believing it important to finish the business. I never experienced more anxiety than on account of the delay, as I could have compleated the whole lines since here, had they met me, with the information they had obtained, but I had to commence a new, and collect the necessary evidence to enable me to decide on the proper lines. . . .<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On the dispute concerning the line on the northern and western sides of the territory acquired from the Creeks by the treaty of Fort Jackson, see William H. Crawford to Jackson, Mar. 8, 1816, note, *post*.